



HOW TO REPAIR A LEAKY TOILET

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, American households waste nearly 900 billion gallons of water due to household leaks. Toilet leaks are easy to detect by following some simple steps.

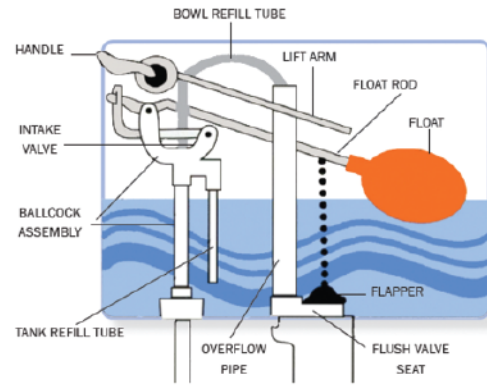
Performing a dye test is a quick and easy way to know if your toilet is leaking. All you need is food coloring (or dye tablets).

Performing the test:

1. Remove the tank cover.
2. Add a few drops of food coloring into the tank.
3. Wait 15 minutes (do not flush the toilet).
4. If color appears in the toilet bowl, a leak is present and repairs must be made.

You can always consider replacing an older toilet with a new and improved high-efficiency toilet (whether it's leaking or not). Or you can try one of the following plumbing fixes.

NOTE: Before attempting any plumbing repairs, make sure to turn the water off at the shut-off valve, usually located directly behind the toilet. Or, if you are not a do-it-yourselfer, call a plumber for assistance.



Some of the most common problems and fixes:

1. **Continuous Running Water:** Check your fill valve and overflow tube. If the water level is set too high, the fill valve will continuously let water into the tank and the excess water will flow down the drain. Adjust the float so the water level is 1 inch below the top of the overflow tube.
2. **The Handle Jiggle:** If the handle gets "hung up" after flushing and you have to jiggle the handle or push it back up to make the flow into the tank shut off, it's time to repair or replace the flapper valve. Over time, a flapper will deteriorate and lose its seal.
3. **Whistling Toilet:** If you hear whistling or whining noises, your toilet may need a new ballcock assembly, especially if adjusting the float ball doesn't help the problem. Complete replacement kits are available at hardware and plumbing stores.
4. **Bent Guide Rods:** Remove the top of your toilet tank and check the flushing mechanism inside. Any bent, rusted or corroded parts may need to be replaced to keep things working smoothly.
5. **Plunger Ball Leak:** If the plunger ball is worn or rough around the edges, it may need to be replaced. If it is not worn, it may not be seating properly due to a scaly or corroded valve seat. Flush the toilet to empty the tank. Sponge out the remaining water. Dry the flush valve seat and sand it smooth with fine emery cloth or plastic scouring pad. If it cannot be smoothed, replace it.

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☎ 408.279.7900
 🌐 sjwater.com
 ✉ Customer.Service@sjwater.com